CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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A method for selling personal information, comprising:

receiving personal information of an owner of the personal information;

specifying a policy related to sale of the personal information;

validating the personal information; and

selectively providing the validated personal information in response to a request and

based upon the policy

- 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the specifying the policy step includes specifying attributes required of a requestor in order to receive the personal information.
- 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the specifying the policy step includes specifying exclusions related to the sale of the personal information.
- 4. The method of claim 1, further including specifying a cost of the personal information, and wherein the providing step further includes selectively providing the validated personal information based upon the cost.
- 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the providing step includes: assessing the cost to a requestor submitting the request; and

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crediting at least a portion of the cost to the owner.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step includes receiving information related to credit card purchases, shopping habits, web browsing habits, assets, or finances of the owner.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step includes recording an indication of electronic purchases by the owner.

A method for selling personal information, comprising:

receiving from a request or a request for personal information of a particular owner of the personal information;

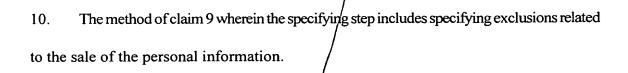
specifying a policy related to sale of the personal information;

validating the personal information through a trusted third party;

determining if the requestor is permitted to receive the requested personal information based upon the policy; and

providing the requested personal information to the requestor if the requestor is permitted to received the personal information.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the specifying step includes specifying attributes related to the sale of the personal information.



- 11. The method of claim 8, further including providing payment to the owner for the sale of the personal information.
- 12. The method of claim 11 wherein the providing step includes crediting an account associated with the owner.
- 13. The method of claim 8, further including receiving a request to search for a particular owner having personal information for sale.

An apparatus for selling personal information, comprising:

a receive module that receives personal information of an owner of the personal information;

a policy module that specifies a policy related to sale of the personal information;

a validate module that validates the personal information; and

a provide module that selectively provides the validated personal information in response to a request and based upon the policy.

- 15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the policy module includes a module that specifies attributes required of a requestor in order to receive the personal information.
- 16. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the policy module includes a module that specifies exclusions related to the sale of the personal information.
- 17. The apparatus of claim 14, further including a cost module that specifies a cost of the personal information, and wherein the provide module further includes a module that selectively provides the validated personal information based upon the cost.
- 18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the provide module includes:

 a module that assesses the cost to a requestor submitting the request; and
 a module that credits at least a portion of the cost to the owner.
- 19. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the receive module includes a module that receives information related to credit card purchases, shopping habits, web browsing habits, assets, or finances of the owner.
- 20. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the receive module includes a module that records an indication of electronic purchases by the owner.